



# News Release

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## **TAMC provides \$400 scholarship to student nurses at annual NMCC health fair**

**Aroostook County** - Northern Maine Community College nursing students recently presented their annual health fair for the community at the Fall and Winter Expo in Presque Isle on September 26 and 27. In support of the nursing program and its students, The Aroostook Medical Center donated a \$400 scholarship award for the team of students with the best health fair display.

Judging of the exhibits was conducted by Bruce Sandstrom, TAMC senior vice president of finance and NMCC Foundation board member; Joy Baressi-Saucier, TAMC vice president of organizational advancement; and Richard Engels, NMCC Foundation board chair. They judged the displays based on visual appeal and presentation, creativity, suitability for multi-age groups, use of educational aids, as well as the students' ability to engage and explain their topics.

"We support the Health Fair because it gives students a chance to build their presentation skills and educate the community. Clinical skill is very important, but a nurse's ability to educate and inform is just as critical," said Saucier. "TAMC recognizes the importance of supporting nurse education. Highly-skilled nurses continue to be in demand, both in hospitals and at other facilities. It is a rewarding."

The award was presented to the three-person team of Sandra Dionne and Tina Dionne of St. David, and Ashlei Look of Jonesport, whose health display topic focused on ergonomics and back safety.

Forty students enrolled in the third semester of the associate degree nursing program prepared eleven educational displays with subjects including seasonal and H1N1 influenza, common winter illnesses, commonly acquired MRSA, hypothermia and frostbite prevention, substance abuse, and stress management and coping strategies. Exhibits also featured information on the benefits of activity, winter sports safety, fall and winter driving safety, and nutrition for sports and energy.

"The generous award donated by TAMC was most appreciated by the students taking part in the health fair," said NMCC nursing instructor, Eileen McDougal. "The team of students selected to have the 'best in show' exhibit indicated the scholarship money will be a great help toward college-related expenses."

The health fair was added to the nursing curriculum to provide the senior students with an opportunity to plan and present a structured teaching project in a public health format. Topics were selected collaboratively by NMCC nursing faculty members and the students with a concentration on issues related to the fall and winter seasons.

Once a comprehensive list was developed, students signed up to work on specific projects according to their interest, with three or four students working in each area. Following the topic selection each team was responsible for developing objectives and an outline of the information they planned to present.

Of the 40 students participating in the health fair, 25 are physically taking courses on the Presque Isle campus. They were joined by 15 second-year students enrolled in NMCC's nursing program who are taking classes at the Houlton Higher Education Center in Southern Aroostook.

The NMCC Health Fair follows the first semester when students learn the concepts of teaching/learning in the public health context and the second semester when students are required to present a clinically-based topic to their peers. In their final semester, students participate in the Fort Fairfield Middle School health fair.

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*Congratulating the winning team of NMCC nursing students who won \$400 for having the best health fair display during their Community Health Fair at the 2009 Fall and Winter Expo are (from left) Richard Engels, NMCC Foundation Board chair; Kelly Landeen, WAGM-TV sales manager and show co-organizer; Bruce Sandstrom, TAMC senior vice president of finance and NMCC Foundation board member; and Joy Baressi-Saucier, TAMC vice president of public relations, development and strategic planning. Accepting the award are winning team members Sandra Dionne (second from right) and Tina Dionne (right) both of St. David. Missing from the photo is winning team member Ashlei Look of Jonesport.*